August 26

Love...is kind. 1 Corinthians 13:4

IT is no more obligatory upon the Lord's people to denounce every wrongdoer whom they may meet in the street than it is for them to tell all homely persons they may see of their lack along the lines of beauty. ...Politeness is always a part of Christian character. In the world it may be a polish, but in the Christian it is not merely a veneer, but represents the true sentiments of the heart, developed along the lines of the spirit of life--love. Love leads to gentleness, patience, kindness, etc., and even in the case of disobedience it will hesitate to utter an unkind word, and will avoid the same so far as duty will permit. Z.'03-153R3194:2

R3150 "Of our heavenly Father it is said that "he is kind to the unthankful." Have I this spirit of kindness -- his spirit?... Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts?"

R2447 "A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness,--how often have such changed the entire course of a human life!"

R4023:2:4 "Let us take this higher plane of thought in respect to our relationship to the world… We are members of the Christ--members of the great Mediator, undergoing schooling and preparation... If we do not learn the necessary lessons, if we do not become copies of God's dear Son, in sympathy, in love, in benevolence toward the world, we will be rejected from membership in the glorious Body…unfit…"

Luke 6:35 "Love ye your enemies, and do good… and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil."

R2412:2:5 "While you must hate all sin, you cannot hate any sinner and yet have the love of God perfected in your heart."

YET HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH WORKS OF DARKNESS

Eph 5:11 Diaglott "Do not be copartners with the unfruitful works of darkness…"

R5038 "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them…

Evidently the Apostle does not mean that we shall undertake to reprove everything that is out of accord with our high ideals of the Divine Law and the Divine will, because he here mentions the things to be reproved, saying, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" -- uncleanness, impure practices, the Apostle evidently had in mind. We must manifest our disapproval when we are in close contact with such things.

This does not mean that we shall leave the preaching of the Gospel to go "slumming," to do "muck-raking." It may not mean that we shall even publicly denounce the evil, but it surely does mean that our lives shall be so contrary to all sinful and impure practices that all may take knowledge that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him."

E294 "A godly life is always a reproof to the ungodly, even where no word of truth may be possible or proper."

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

1Pet 4:15 "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

R4282 "Sweep before your own door'"

R5167 "Some people are always seeking to find fault with others, and seem to think they are commissioned to correct the whole world. We find no authority given in the Bible for such a course...

Each member of the New Creation should educate his conscience to discriminate between *brotherly-love* and *busybodying*, and should learn to apply the rules of justice and love to every act, word and thought..."

R5274 "The Adversary is on the alert to ensnare God's people and to develop in them the spirit of busybodying and lovelessness, under the guise of duty, love of righteousness, justice, etc. They overlook the fact that God neither authorized us to judge one another, nor to exact justice from each other."

R5414 "In dealing with one another, in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the gauge of the Lord's judgment with us. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us."

KINDNESS FROM THE HEART

R2204 "In proportion as perfect Love is attained the effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of kindness…

It seeks to interpret the conduct of others charitably. If pure and good intentioned itself, it prefers, and so far as possible endeavors, to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions... Love makes all possible allowance for errors of judgment, rather than to impugn the motives of the heart."

F291 "Unquestionably, the majority of the Church troubles (and society and family troubles as well) spring not from a desire to wrong, nor even from a wrong unintentionally committed, but from misunderstandings and, at least, partial misinterpretations of intentions or motives."

EXTREME ISSUES

R5414 "The Scriptures instruct us that now the Church should judge its members along certain lines. We are not to judge one another's *hearts*... But we are to judge one another's *conduct.* If one should live immorally, it would be the duty of the Church to deal with him according to the immorality of his conduct…Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and if doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing Him."

R3194 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

PAUL BEFORE FELIX

--ACTS 24:10-16,24-26.--MAY 17--

"I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."--Psa. 23:4.

FIVE days after Paul's arrival a prisoner at Caesarea the Chief Priest, Ananias, accompanied by a public advocate and a deputation from the Sanhedrin, also appeared in the city to make charges against Paul, and the trial at once took place. The advocate, Tertullus, began his case by making very flattering allusions to the governor--very hypocritical allusions, as we know from secular histories of the time. "Both Josephus and Tacitus represent him as one of the most corrupt and oppressive rulers ever sent by the Romans into Judea."

Flattery of this kind, undeserved praise, is extremely reprehensible; totally contrary to the principles which govern the Lord's followers. It is dishonesty, hypocrisy. Nevertheless, flattery is a very powerful weapon, which the unregenerate have little scruple in using, and it frequently gives them a decided advantage in worldly affairs, in opposition to the Lord's faithful, who are restrained from such flatteries, being obliged to consider truth and honesty in all their words and dealings. Some of the Lord's people are, on the other hand, inclined to carry honesty in such matters to an extreme: many in Paul's stead would have felt it their bounden duty to have upbraided Felix roundly. [1]It is no more obligatory upon the Lord's people to denounce every wrongdoer whom they may meet in the street than it is for them to tell all homely persons they may see of their lack along the lines of beauty. The Apostle's course in this case is an illustration of the possession of the spirit of a sound mind. When it came his turn to address the governor he

[1] ½ Aug. 26 Manna, 1Cor. 13:4

neither upbraided nor reproved him, nor did he utter any words of flattery. The introduction to his defense was every word true in the fullest sense, and yet it was framed and presented in courteous and agreeable language.

{2}Politeness is always a part of Christian character. In the world it may be polish, but in the Christian it is not merely a veneer, but represents the true sentiments of the heart, developed along the lines of the spirit of life--love. Love leads to gentleness, patience, kindness, etc., and even in the case of disobedience it will hesitate to utter an unkind word, and will avoid the same so far as duty will permit.

The advocate, or attorney, Tertullus, made serious charges against the Apostle. He would have him appear to Felix as more or less a conspirator against the Roman government--at least a raiser of tumults and seditions amongst the people. This charge was made broadly, applying not only to the present instance, the tumult at Jerusalem, but that everywhere, throughout the provinces of Rome, wherever he went, tumults arose amongst the people. It did not seem to occur to this attorney that the tumults might be caused by evildoers in their endeavor to stop the progress of righteousness and truth; the thought he endeavored to present to Felix was that whoever occasioned tumults, regardless of his plea, was to be considered an enemy to good government, law and order. The same arguments are powerful today with those who do not appreciate the true principles of justice and liberty. It will not surprise us at all if by and by the enemies of present truth take a similarly unjust stand against us, who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Apostle--seeking to present the truths of a new dispensation to our brethren in Babylon, who are not only themselves unwilling to hear, but are easily aroused to anger, vituperation and persecution, that they may prevent others from receiving the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people.

When the charges had been preferred, Paul was permitted to speak for himself, and did so to good effect. He showed (1) that he had but recently arrived in Jerusalem; that he had raised no riot or commotion, but that, on the contrary, at the time of his arrest he was quietly worshiping God in the Temple--disputing with nobody and interfering with nobody's rights. (2) He challenged his accusers to produce proofs of the truthfulness of their charges--denying their ability to prove them; and thus in a most reasonable and legal way showed that the burden of proof was upon his accusers, and not upon himself. (3) He did confess, however, that there was some ground for the animosity manifested against him, and this was that his fellow-Jews charged him with believing and teaching heresy--a split-off from the Jewish religion. It was his answer to the charge that he was a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; he denied that it was heresy against the Jewish religion, and a sect, or split-off party. It was his enemies who called Christianity heresy, and separation from Judaism, but their charges were false from the Apostle's standpoint. Christianity, instead of being split off from Judaism, was the natural outcome and proper development of it--the fulfilment of the promises of God upon which the hopes and prospects of Judaism were all built. The Apostle shows this matter most distinctly in his letter to the Romans (chap. 11), where he pictures the Jewish nation as the olive tree whose root was the Abrahamic promise, and whose branches were the people of Israel. He does not picture Christianity as another tree, nor yet as a new shoot out of this original olive tree, but he does picture it as the fuller development of this tree, representing all Jews refusing to progress and to accept of Christ, as branches that were broken off--all the true Jews who continued to be recognized of the Lord,--all the Israelites indeed,--were the Christians who from Pentecost onward have been known as spiritual Israelites.

Progressing, the Apostle justified the claim which he made at his hearing before the Sanhedrin; viz., that a serious part of the objection raised against him by his countrymen was his belief in the resurrection of the dead, which some of them also allowed, or believed,-- "that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."

That the Apostle preached a gospel in many particulars different from the general belief of our day, is quite evident from this presentation of it--the making prominent of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. True, some might claim that it is unnecessary to make this doctrine prominent, because there are few Sadducees today--few who deny the resurrection of the dead. We answer that there are few who believe that there are any dead. The vast majority of mankind, Christians as well as heathen, have adopted the theory that none are dead--that those who appear to die really become more alive than ever. Not believing in anybody's being dead it would be impossible for them to believe in the resurrection of the dead. Instead, another thought prevails now; viz., a resurrection of the *body*-- the person or soul, it is claimed, does not die, but merely sheds the body as an old garment, and at some future time is to have it back. But it will be conceded that if this were all that the Apostle meant by the resurrection of the dead,--if he really meant a "resurrection of the body," his argument was a weak one. It would be foolish to waste much time or breath or energy in discussing such a proposition as would have no particular advantage or merit, even if it were proven.

The Apostle had a totally different thought: his preaching was to the effect that death is a real penalty for sin, and that there never could be life or consciousness, except by a resurrection of the dead, and that a resurrection of the dead could only come by divine favor in the accomplishment of a redemption of all that had been condemned to death. In preaching the resurrection, therefore, he was declaring not only his faith that Christ Jesus was not dead, but also his faith that God would in due time grant the world a resurrection. Thus Jesus and the resurrection constituted the sum and substance of the gospel hope from the Apostle's standpoint and--because we take his--from our standpoint also.

The question may occur to some--if resurrection *(anastasis)* means a full, complete raising up out of death conditions into perfection of life conditions, how could the Apostle here speak of the resurrection "both of the just and unjust"?

How shall we understand this, and harmonize it with other Scriptures which declare that only the justified shall attain full perfection of life?--that he that hath the Son may have life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life--in its perfection?--that he that will not obey the great Prophet shall be cut off from amongst his people--cut off from life, in the Second Death?

We answer that the Apostle is not carrying his argument down into the future, declaring that in the future the just ones shall attain to the full perfection of life and the unjust ones also; he is merely referring to those who in the present time are just and unjust. The just of the present time are "justified by faith," and if faithful to the conditions of the call are to have part in the First Resurrection. The unjust of the present time are the unjustified, the unbelievers, and the Apostle explains that they believe not because the god of this world hath blinded their minds. (2 Cor. 4:4.) However, as the Scriptures distinctly show, it is to be the special work of the next age to open all the blind eyes and to unstop all the deaf ears, and to cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth, to the intent that those now unjustified, unjust, may be just before God, and thus share in the resurrection which is provided for all, and which will accomplish the resurrection of all except as its gracious provisions are individually rejected.

Having stated thus his belief in a future life, by a resurrection, the Apostle declares that his present life was being used in accordance with that hope of a future life--with a conscience that controlled his thoughts and words and deeds in relationship to God and men.

Can we wonder that Felix, perverse though he was, himself felt disinclined to yield so noble a prisoner to death, even to accommodate and please the flattering attorney and the influential high priest, whose favor he would undoubtedly prefer to hold? The record leads us additionally to infer that Felix considered that in Paul he had a good opportunity for receiving a bribe for the performance of justice; for in his narrative the Apostle proceeded to show that so far from seeking to do injury to his fellow-creatures, he had brought with him from foreign cities large sums of money. Felix thus perceived that the prisoner, who had liberal education and talent

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{2} ½ Aug. 26 Manna

and Roman citizenship, had friends not only in Jerusalem, but abroad. He doubtless concluded that they would be quite willing to make him a handsome present to effect the Apostle's release. This is the suggestion of the 26th verse.

Apparently Felix was considerably interested in his prisoner, and mentioned him to his wife, a Jewess: he was called before them, that they might know further respecting this new teaching. His curiosity was evidently soon more than satisfied, as the Apostle proceeded with his subject, showing the plan of God, the righteousness of the Law, the inability of fallen man to fully meet its requirements, that Jesus became the Redeemer of those condemned by the Law, and that now salvation and life eternal are open to as many as will obey the gospel--forsake sin and lay hold by faith upon the Redeemer. The Apostle proceeded to show that righteousness was the reasonable requirement of the divine Law, and that the acceptance of God's favor in Christ led to self-restraint and opposition to natural tendencies, and that there is a judgment day to come, in the which all deflections from righteousness will be rewarded with stripes proportionate to knowledge. The governor trembled; his own wicked life and licentious course stood out before his mental gaze, and he realized that, according to the standards presented, he would have many stripes to bear in the future. His wife, Drusilla, was really the wife of King Azizus; but her conscience, evidently more seared than his, seems not to have been in the least agitated. Felix suggested that at a more convenient season he would hear further of the gospel; but we doubt if ever he called for any further explanations--he already had enough, more than he was willing to obey. His course is one too frequently imitated since. Many who tremble as they think of their sins, hope that a more convenient time for breaking off may come to them; but a convenient season for abandoning sin--when sin indulged in our members will make no objection to being ousted--will never come. He who would become a follower of the Lord Jesus, must courageously accept of Christ, the power divine for the breaking of the shackles of his slavery to sin--must first love the liberty wherewith Christ alone can make us free. Those who have not this craving will remain slaves of sin until the glorious Millennial morning shall break, until after the completion of the election Church of "overcomers"--until the dawning of the Millennial morning, when the overcomers, with Christ at their head, shall break all the shackles of sin and set all prisoners free, and command all to render obedience to the laws of the Kingdom of God, inflicting stripes of punishment proportionate to their present wilfulness in sin, with a view to their recovery, and for restitution to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed with the precious blood.

A good lesson may be learned from the Apostle's method of presenting the truth to Felix. He did not attack the governor's character, nor berate him for his sins. He did better than this. Ignoring the individual entirely, he lifted the mirror of the perfect law of love and liberty and righteousness before the governor, and let him see for himself how far short he came of the perfect standard which alone God can approve. Would that all of God's children could learn thus to reprove sin--by letting the light of truth and the corroboration of the same in their own conduct shine out --their words, and no less their conduct, being epistles of the grace of God and his gracious arrangements, both for rewarding those who seek him and for chastening and correcting those who require it!

The courage of the Apostle in holding up the truth before one who so largely had to do with the decision of his own case is remarkable and commendable. It is in full agreement with the declaration of our Golden Text. Those who are on the Lord's side, and who, therefore, have the Lord on their side, in all of life's affairs, need fear no evil. This absence of fear, however, should not in us, any more than in the Apostle, lead to bravado or discourteous manner or language. The divine rule is, as expressed by the Apostle, that we should speak the truth in love.--Eph. 4:15.

Another lesson taught us by the Apostle's experiences, yea, by all of the Lord's notable children, from the Master down, is that the assaults of calumny, slander, etc., can do them no lasting harm. Look at the Captain of our salvation, against whom all manner of evil was said and done falsely, even to the extent of calling him the prince of devils, and crucifying him as a blasphemer of God. How those assaults of the great Adversary, through his deluded children of disobedience, serve now to make the Lord's character and conduct the more transparent and resplendent! So also it is in respect to the Apostle Paul's experiences--they all reflect grandly upon his character today. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" gives a scene which illustrates this feature of our lesson and encourages all of us to disregard the slanders and evil speakings of the present time, if so be that we can continually realize the divine favor and blessing with us and upon our efforts to serve the Lord. We give an extract from Bunyan's writings as follows:--

"Then the shepherds had the pilgrims to another place, called Mount Innocence, and there they saw a man clothed all in white, and two men, Prejudice and Ill-will, continually casting dirt upon him. Now behold, the dirt, whatsoever they cast at him, would in a little time fall off again, and his garment would look as clean as if no dirt had been cast thereat. Then said the pilgrims, 'What means this?' The shepherds answered, 'This man is named Godly-man, and this garment is to show the innocency of his life. Now, those that throw dirt at him are such as hate his well-doing; but, as you see, the dirt will not stick upon his clothes; so it shall be with him that liveth innocently in the world. Whoever they be that would make such men dirty, they labor all in vain; for God, by that a little time is spent, will cause that their innocence shall break forth as the light, and their righteousness as the noon-day.'"

R5124 Highlights: "THE KINDNESS, HUMILITY AND PATIENCE OF LOVE" *"God is Love."*--1 John 4:8…

IN THE SCRIPTURES the word love is used to express the complete whole of the grand and glorious qualities which make up the perfection of Jehovah. God is the personification of Love. To whatever extent any one possesses this quality of Love to that extent he has character-likeness to God…

With those who have that earnest desire and determined zeal for righteousness which God wishes them to have, every word and every act has something to do with the development of this quality of Love. Our Heavenly Father does not expect us to acquire perfection of love in the flesh, for its weaknesses and imperfections will not permit us to do so; but He expects to find in those who will be members of the Body of Christ that earnestness of spirit and faithful endeavor which demonstrate that if they had perfect bodies they would always manifest love...

KINDNESS NOT ALWAYS LOVE

The followers of Christ have consecrated their own wills and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Love; for it is the Spirit of God, who is Love. Therefore their sentiment toward one another must be one of loving interest. Perhaps they are not always wise in knowing how to exercise loving-kindness; sometimes their fallen nature may lead them to think that a certain course of action would be the loving one, when it is the very reverse--the wrong course. Hence we need to be on the alert to perceive to what extent we are using the spirit of a sound mind in our conduct and in our dealings with one another.

A person might manifest kindness in word and act without having the right motive. Sometimes kindness is prompted by motives other than love. It might be for selfish reasons, or for the purpose of entrapping another to his disadvantage. This form of fraud has become so common as to cause no particular comment.

The Christian's experience is a continual schooling. Daily we are learning more and more about ourselves and about the Wisdom and Justice of God. As we learn these lessons day by day, we are learning more to reprobate and correct in ourselves. In thus discovering our own imperfections, we should learn, as a matter of course, not to expect perfection in others; and we should give them credit for doing their best to exemplify the highest ideals which they have in respect to the unity and perfection required for membership in the Body of Christ.

Love is always kind; Love cannot wilfully injure another… Love might sometimes be regarded as unkind, for the principles governing the actions of the individual might be misunderstood...

Although our spirit, or motive, may be right, yet we may not always have the ability to manifest it; and so we must make due allowance when others misunderstand us.

THE POWER OF INDWELLING LOVE…

When we see others who have a smaller appreciation of justice than we have and who do things contrary to the principles of righteousness, we rejoice that we know better and are able to do better than they. The spirit of a sound mind shows us that we have more ability along some lines than have some others, and that others have more ability along some lines than we. Because of the fall of man, all are weak in one direction or another. The knowledge of the imperfect condition of humanity should humble us rather than puff us up...

Knowledge puffs up because of selfishness of heart, because we are more likely to be conscious of our own good qualities than of those of others. Hence those born with less selfishness have less to contend with, and those born with more of it have more to contend with; and in proportion as we have the Spirit of Christ, we are able to overcome the tendency to be puffed up with what little knowledge we possess. Indwelling love has the power to build up, to strengthen character, and to counteract the wrong effect of the fallen human nature.

PROPER AND IMPROPER CAUSES OF PROVOCATION

The whole world has a tendency to recognize the principles of Justice. Even those whose conduct toward others is far from just, seem to crave an opportunity to fight against injustice, provided that the case is not one with which they are identified. This inclination often manifests itself in acts of violence, as when mobs vent their anger against some poor sinner who has done something to provoke their wrath...

The Lord's people should not possess this spirit of intolerance. We should have patience, sympathy and endurance when things go wrong, and should make due allowance for those who are transgressors. The more we possess of the spirit of patience, the more we have of the spirit of forbearance and the more difficult it is to arouse us to anger. Wherever the spirit of love prevails, its possessor is not easily moved to do or say anything unkind or unjust...

Love would have us remember that while another may be in *error,* it does not follow that he is at *fault.* He may not have understood a matter correctly or his judgment may not have been the best, owing to inherited weakness over which he has no control. Before condemning any one we should make sure that he is *at fault.* Justice demands that we do no less than investigate before we condemn. Love urges us to be as merciful in the case as is possible...

RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION A PROPER FEELING

The Lord's people are not to be of that immovable kind that cannot feel any resentment of injustice. Lack of ability to have just indignation would imply lack of morals and of harmony with God. Of our Lord Jesus it is written that when He beheld the unrighteous condition of the rulers of His people, and saw the injustice of their conduct, He "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." (Mark 3:5.) Like Him, we should be wholly out of sympathy with everything not in harmony with God.

We are to love righteousness and hate iniquity. This word *iniquity,* which means the very opposite of Love, is a strong expression. A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God, who is in opposition to all forms of iniquity. Of our Lord, the Scriptures say, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Psa. 45:7.) All who are cultivating character pleasing to God, all who are endeavoring to become exact copies of His dear Son, should put away every impurity, everything not right. Whatever is wrong should always be opposed by our new minds.

On the other hand, if we have Love as the Lord has it, we shall hate the *wrong,* but not the *individual* who does wrong. In proportion as love controls our minds and hearts, we shall feel sympathy for those who are in iniquity, for we remember that the race of mankind are fallen from their original perfection. We should think that to do evil is not their intention, their will, but that they are suffering from an iniquitous disease. Love is patient and tries to find extenuating circumstances and conditions. It seeks to help the evil-doer…

Love should say and do those things that will incite to loving words rather than stir up bitterness, which leads to anger, wrath, malice, strife and evil-speaking." (Eph. 4:31,32.) In other words, it is much better to be a peacemaker than a strife-maker. Yet we are not to have *peace* at *any price;* rather we should have peace, if possible, where *principle* is not involved. We should stir up strife only where some good is sure to result.

The degree of love, the strength of love, may be determined by the ease with which it may be swerved and aroused to opposition or to impatience and anger. We have already seen that there may be times when patience might stand in the way of the real interests of the case and where Love would take steps to correct what seemed to be an apparent evil; but we must remember that balance of mind, or judgment, is not ours by nature. *Perfection of decision* is a quality belonging only to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ…

Our balance of judgment is so poor that generally we are too hasty. Very few of us take in the full circumstances surrounding ourselves and those with whom we have to do...

GENEROSITY AND SYMPATHY TO BE CULTIVATED

We are in the School of Christ, the Great Teacher… We should know the difference between right and wrong… Yet with all our advantages of knowledge, we *"cannot* do the things that we would"; consequently, we feel a measure of sympathy for *ourselves,* and we should extend the same measure to others. Indeed, we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, although the Lord's Word says that we are not to judge either ourselves or others. We cannot read the hearts of those around us and therefore are not competent to decide what motives prompt their actions nor what degree of punishment should be meted out to them…

If we are following on to know the Lord, our mental discernment will become clearer and our minds will broaden in sympathy for others. Thus we shall become more like our Father in Heaven, for He is kind to the unthankful and just to the unjust, as our Lord pointed out.--Matt. 5:44-48.

PRIDE A CAUSE OF MUCH IRRITABILITY

Undoubtedly the causes for irritability and for being provoked vary in different persons. With some, it is because of a nervous condition of health, which renders them less easily able to control themselves according to the standards which they themselves recognize. With others, the cause of irritability is *pride.* In fact, pride is connected with nearly everything that is injurious to the people of God. Wherever pride exists, the person is susceptible to evil influences from every quarter.

Pride manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes it exhibits itself as *self-esteem,* leading one to think too highly of himself and too lightly of others, even to the extent of imagining himself to be their superior. At other times, pride manifests itself as *approbativeness:* anything that conflicts with the *desire to appear well before others* touches a tender spot…

One of the best aids to the learning of this important lesson is to learn to judge ourselves--to scrutinize our own motives. If we find that we have acted unjustly toward another, we should go and make amends to the best of our ability; we should properly scourge our own *minds,* and seek to make matters right with the one we have wronged."

R4154 "LET NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN… Whenever the "brethren" (of whom so much might be expected) become our enemies the test of our love will be the severer. In view of these things, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy living and God-likeness?" In view of the solemnity of the situation, how "circumspect" we all should be! How we should scrutinize our every act and word and thought! And our thoughts require our special care, because by the *thoughts and intents of the heart* we are being judged. And words and acts proceed therefrom. How often *ambition* hides its envious desires under the cloak of *duty!* How many of the fires of the "Holy Inquisition" were lighted by the torch of "duty!" Let us each be on guard. Ourselves or others we might deceive, but not God, who says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; he that doeth righteousness is righteous"--not merely he who professes. He whose acts and words are loving, gentle, kind, considerate under trying conditions gives evidence of being begotten of the God of love... To feel even a coolness of sentiment in connection with the prosperity of a brother or a lack of interest in his welfare is a sign of serious danger--that we have slipped from the mark. This should alarm us and lead to fresh energy."